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Department of State

1959 MAR 19 PM 6 10

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PRESIDENTIAL HANDLING

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SENT TO: Amembassy PARIS 3470 PRIORITY

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Origin

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Info:

PRESIDENTIAL HANDLING

Following is text of letter from President to General de Gaulle re French Mediterranean fleet. The President has directed this be shown to General Norstad to be sure it does not create great difficulties for him. Following this consultation with Norstad letter should be delivered soonest to General de Gaulle. Advise date time delivery.

QUOTE March 19, 1959

Dear General de Gaulle:

As I said in my letter to you of March fourteenth, I continue to attach the greatest importance to maintaining the strength of our military posture through the fullest and closest cooperation in NATO. As you are aware, I have long had a deep and natural interest in this common effort, because of my conviction that the fate of France and of Free Europe is of incalculable importance to my own country.

Since

Drafted by:

EUR:Timmons/McBride/Brown:lmz

Telegraphic transmission and

Callon approved by:

S/S - Mr. Calhoun

Clearances:

The White House

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By

Date 6/17/77

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-3- # 3470 to Paris

As you said in your letter of March twelfth, Western solidarity in the critical Berlin and German issue is of paramount importance. I fear that the unilateral action of the French Government may give the impression of divisions within our alliance, ^{divisions} which I am convinced do not exist on fundamental issues.

It is my hope that the military command structure of NATO will always be such as to deserve support of all the member nations. Specifically, I believe that in this respect the Mediterranean fleets of the United States, United Kingdom and France should be on equal footing. For the present, the most logical status for all three would appear to be that held at present by the fleets of the United States and the United Kingdom, that is, under national control during peacetime, earmarked for NATO in the event of war. I further hope that, as we have said before, France will impart to NATO her thoughts ^{on such arrangements.} ~~on the NATO command structure~~ I am sure NATO would view such action with sympathy and would give the most careful consideration to France's views. The result of such consultation in NATO would, I am sure, contribute to the strong and united posture which we all desire in this crucial period.

Please accept, Mr. President, the expression of my highest consideration and sincere friendship.

Dwight D. Eisenhower UNQUOTE

Observe PRESIDENTIAL HANDLING



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